

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows. The claims are in the format as required by 35 C.F.R. § 1.121.

1.-22. (Cancelled).

23. (Currently amended) A method of introducing a fluid into a bone, comprising:
preparing an opening in a bone using a bone tap, the bone tap comprising a body, a passage extending along at least a portion of the body, one or more openings located at a distal end of the body and communicating with the passage, and threading located near [[an]] the distal end of the body of the bone tap;
introducing a fluid to the bone through the passage and at least one of the openings of the bone tap;
allowing the fluid to spread to a portion of the bone;
removing the bone tap from the opening in the bone; and
introducing a bone fastener into the opening in the bone formed by the bone tap.

24. (Currently amended) The method of claim 23, wherein the fluid comprises bone cement, wherein the bone cement is allowed to harden at least partially before the bone tap is removed from the opening in the bone formed by the bone tap, and wherein the portion of the bone filled with the bone cement maintains a shape complementary to the distal end of the body of the bone tap following the removal of the bone tap and prior to the introduction of the bone fastener.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein the fluid comprises a bone filler and a medicament.

26. (Currently amended) The method of claim 23, wherein preparing the opening in the bone using the bone tap further comprises attaching a driver to the bone tap, placing the bone tap at an initial opening formed in the bone, and rotating the ~~bone tap~~ driver to thread the bone tap into the bone.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein introducing the fluid to the bone comprises coupling a fluid delivery system to the bone tap, and activating the fluid delivery system to move fluid through the bone tap and into the bone.

28.-30. (Cancelled).

31. (Currently amended) The method of claim 23, wherein the step of introducing a fluid to the bone comprises the steps of:

(1) introducing the fluid to a first location in the opening in the bone formed by the bone tap;

(2) moving the bone tap; and

(3) introducing the fluid to a second location in the opening in the bone formed by the bone tap.

32. (Previously presented) The method of claim 31, wherein the step of moving the bone tap comprises partially withdrawing the bone tap.

33. (Currently amended) A method of introducing a fluid into a bone, comprising:

preparing an opening in a bone using a bone tap, the bone tap comprising a body, a passage extending along at least a portion of the body, one or more openings communicating with the passage, and threading located near an end of the body of the bone tap;

introducing a fluid to the bone through the passage and at least one of the openings of the bone tap;

allowing the fluid to spread to a portion of the bone; [[and]]

coupling a removable driver to the bone tap, and using the driver to remove the bone tap from the bone; and

introducing a bone fastener into the opening in the bone formed by the bone tap.

34. (Currently amended) The method of claim 33, wherein the fluid comprises bone cement, wherein the bone tap is removed from the opening after the bone cement begins to cure.

35. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, wherein the fluid comprises a bone filler and a medicament.

36. (Currently amended) The method of claim 33, wherein preparing the opening in the bone using the bone tap further comprises attaching a driver to the bone tap, placing the bone tap at an initial opening formed in the bone, and rotating the ~~bone tap~~ driver to thread the bone tap into the bone.

37. (Previously presented) The method of claim 33, wherein introducing a fluid to the bone comprises coupling a fluid delivery system to the bone tap, and activating the fluid delivery system to move fluid through the bone tap and into the bone.

38. (Currently amended) The method of claim 33, wherein the step of introducing a fluid to the bone comprises:

(1) introducing the fluid to a first location in the opening in the bone formed by the bone tap;

(2) moving the bone tap; and

(3) introducing the fluid to a second location in the opening in the bone formed by the bone tap.

39. (Previously presented) The method of claim 38, wherein the step of moving the bone tap comprises partially withdrawing the bone tap.

40. (Currently amended) A method of introducing a fluid into a bone, said method comprising the steps of:

preparing an opening in a bone using a bone tap, the bone tap comprising:

a body;

a passage through at least a portion of the body;

threading located near ~~[[an]]~~ a distal end of the body; and

one or more openings through the threading in communication with the passage, the one or more openings configured to introduce bone filler into the bone;

advancing the bone tap to a first location in the opening in the bone formed by the bone tap;

introducing a fluid to the first bone location in the opening in the bone formed by the bone tap through the passage and the one or more openings in the bone tap;

moving the bone tap to a second location in the opening in the bone formed by the bone tap;

introducing the fluid to the second bone location; and
withdrawing the bone tap from the bone.

41. (Previously presented) The method of claim 40, wherein the step of moving the bone tap to a second location comprises partially withdrawing the bone tap.

42. (Currently amended) The method of claim 40, wherein the fluid comprises bone cement, wherein the bone tap is removed from the opening after the bone cement begins to cure.

43. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 40, wherein the fluid comprises a bone filler and a medicament.

44. (Currently amended) The method of claim 40, wherein advancing the bone tap to the first location in the opening in the bone comprises attaching a driver to the bone tap, placing the bone tap at an initial opening formed in the bone, and rotating the ~~bone tap~~ driver to thread the bone tap into the bone.

45. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 40, wherein introducing the fluid to the first bone location comprises coupling a fluid delivery system to the bone tap, and activating the fluid delivery system to move the fluid through the bone tap and into the bone.

46.-53. (Cancelled).